

www.consumer-action.org

**PO Box 70037
Washington, DC 20024
202-544-3088**

**221 Main St, Suite 480
San Francisco, CA 94105
415-777-9648**

**523 W. Sixth St., Suite 1105
Los Angeles, CA 90014
213-624-4631**

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

October 19, 2010

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

As the Cablevision-Fox dispute stretches into its fifth day, I take this opportunity to applaud your statement that the “petty gamesmanship” needs to end. Consumer Action¹ agrees. After all the attention paid and money poured into the digital transition of broadcast channels to protect “free” TV, broadcasters who get free spectrum from the public should not hold viewers hostage in retransmission negotiations with video distributors.

Such feuds over retransmission fees are becoming increasingly commonplace, with five blackouts this year alone. They have affected about 19 million viewers across the country. And they have blocked access to widely viewed events such as the Academy Awards and professional sports games.

Consumer Action respectfully urges the Commission to reconsider outdated retransmission consent rules and issue a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that will protect consumer access to broadcast television without the fear of increased costs or interrupting programming, due to higher and higher retransmission fees.

Sincerely,



Linda Sherry
Director, National Priorities

¹ *Through multilingual financial education materials, community outreach, and issue-focused advocacy, Consumer Action empowers underrepresented consumers nationwide to assert their rights in the marketplace and financially prosper.*